UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
Office of the Chief Information Officer

Information Technology Strategic Plan

FY2000-FY2004

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER

Information Technology (IT) has played an important role in enabling the Department of Labor's mission and programs for more than a quarter century. Our automated systems and information have grown incrementally during that time to address the basic needs of individual Department of Labor (DOL) agencies and offices. As we stand poised on the eve of a new millennium, it is appropriate to define an IT vision that will guide the whole Department into the 21st century. The FY 2000 – 2004 DOL IT Strategic Plan represents our collective vision of how IT can enable, improve, and extend the services we provide to the American public and to our own employees.

This Plan establishes the framework to align information technology resources with the Department's mission, goals, and objectives. The Plan was developed by a select working group of 35 senior DOL executives drawn from program, administrative, and IT disciplines throughout the Department. The 35-member team engaged DOL staff members, conducted literature searches to learn about best practices, and defined agency IT needs. The process produced a knowledge based approach to their deliberations on the IT vision. Our mandate was straightforward: establish the five-year information technology strategic direction for all of DOL. Through two intensive workshops, the IT strategic focus areas, IT initiatives, and implementation activities were established. In addition, the team recognized the importance of "managing for results" consistent with Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) principles, and committed themselves to the development of performance measures in the tactical-level plans to be developed in support of the initiatives contained in this Plan. These efforts will ensure the Department acquires, develops, implements, and manages information technologies in a manner that best meets the needs of DOL customers and staff, and supports sound IT investment decision-making. Based on these efforts, the Department will focus its information technology strategic efforts in the following three areas:

- Service Delivery
- IT Architecture, Standards, and Security
- Internal Management

I commend the working group for its collaborative efforts in defining a "One Department" vision for IT management.

This IT Strategic Plan is a living document that must adapt to changing circumstances and requirements. We will assess our strategic direction on a periodic basis, measure our progress toward achieving our strategic intent, and update the Plan at least every three years. Future versions of the Plan will reflect the continued collaboration of our extended IT community, including program, administrative, and IT specialists.

Patricia W. Lattimore
Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management/
Chief Information Officer

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Department of Labor (DOL) Information Technology (IT) Strategic Plan is to establish a comprehensive vision for managing information resources in a manner that supports and promotes the fulfillment of the Department's mission and programs. This plan includes the following sections:

- *Department Mission and Goals* – Provides an overview of Department mission and goals as defined in the DOL Strategic Plan. This section provides further context for IT strategic planning.

- *Current Environment* – Addresses the current state of the DOL mission/business climate policy environment and the importance of IT to enable the Department to respond to the emerging realities of the new global economy.

- *Vision Statement* – Provides a qualitative description of the IT infrastructure that DOL requires to support its mission and programs.

- *Mission Statement* – Defines the roles, responsibilities, and activities of the DOL IT community, and embraces the full range of program, administrative, and IT perspectives.

- *Opportunities and Challenges* – Addresses the major, overarching opportunities and challenges facing the DOL IT Community.

- *Strategic Focus Areas* – Defines the three IT strategic focus areas:

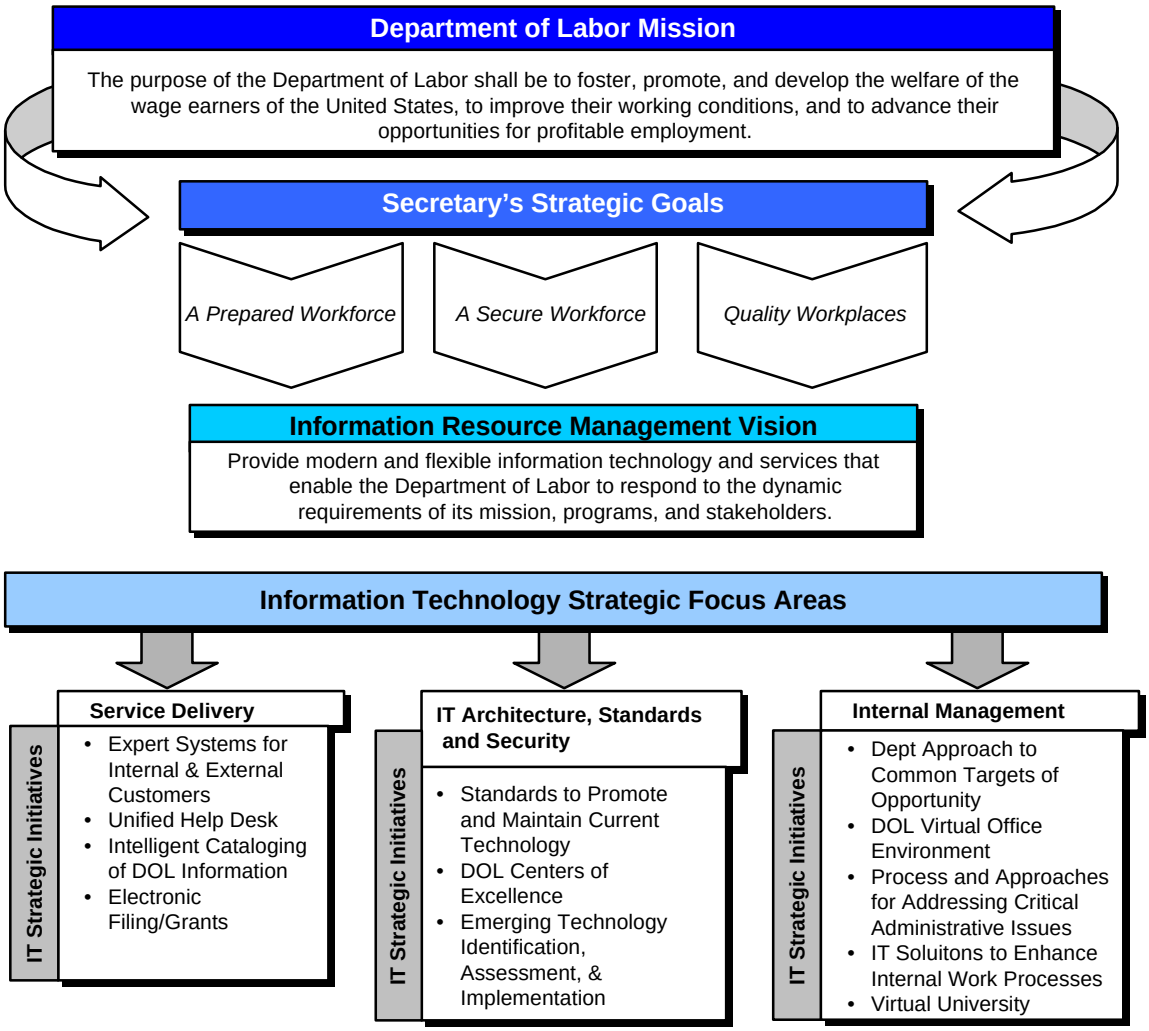
  - Improve departmental service delivery in support of the Secretary's priorities
  - Develop and maintain an IT architecture, standards, and security program
  - Improve the internal management of the Department.

- Strategic Initiatives – *Identifies the specific strategic initiatives associated with each focus area.*

- *Strategic Vision Implementation* – Describes DOL's approach for operationalizing the plan, measuring progress toward implementing the focus areas, ensuring development of operational plans that support the focus areas, and maintaining and updating the IT Strategic Plan.

The graphic presented below visually depicts the alignment of Department, Secretary, and IRM missions and goals with the IT Strategic initiatives and is provided as a reference guide for the reader. Presented at the beginning of the section, the corresponding portion of the graphic is highlighted in relation to the overall alignment of the strategic components.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT



IT Planning Process

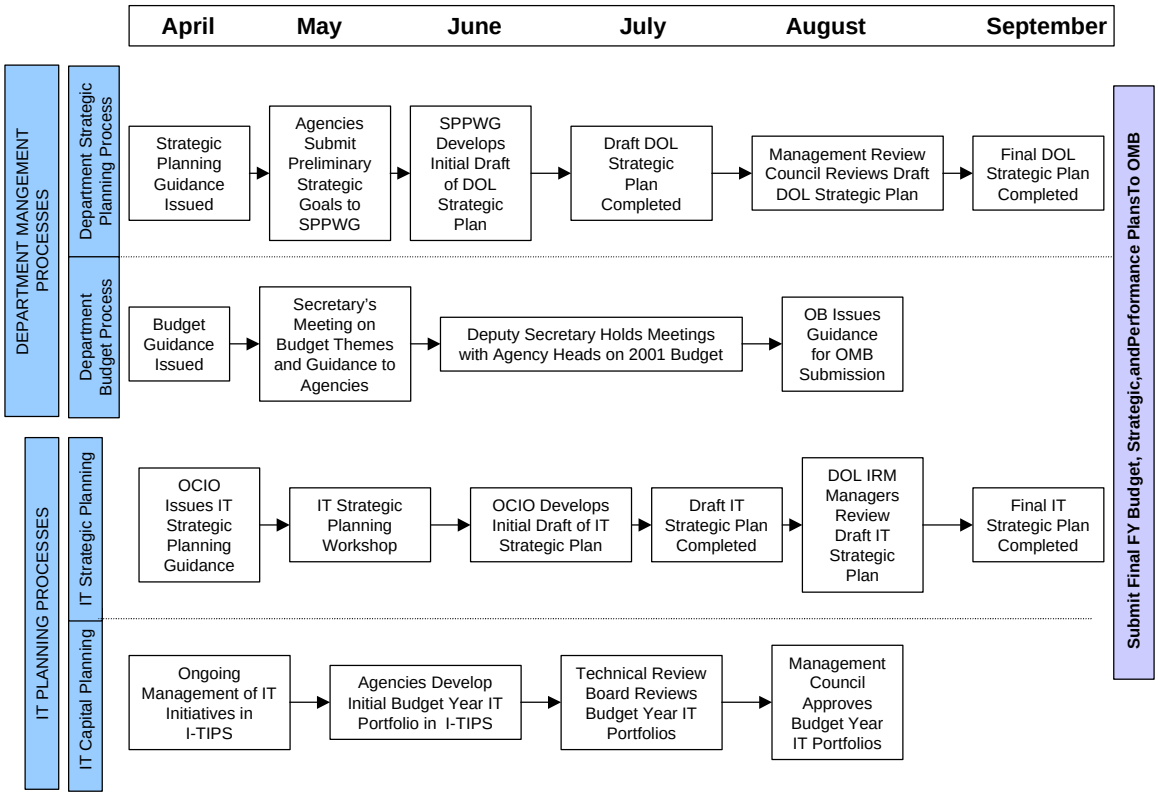
The DOL IT Strategic Plan was developed using a collaborative process that drew on the skills and perspectives of Administrative Officers, IRM Managers, and Program Managers who participated in two facilitated retreats/workshops. The workshops focused on identifying and defining the IT strategic focus areas that would support the

Department's long term mission, the Secretary's current priorities, and strategic Presidential directives.

The first strategic planning workshop focused on defining strategic focus areas and related initiatives that would guide the Department for the next three to five years. The second workshop focused on finalizing the strategic plan and developing an implementation plan framework. As the CIO works with the Agencies to implement the strategic plan, the working group will provide ongoing advice, program evaluation, and direction as required.

This process has enabled the Department to develop a shared strategic vision for IT that has support from all IT stakeholders. The process also fostered increased communication among IT stakeholders and built a foundation for a collaborative DOL IT community. As depicted in the following graphic, this process was developed to operate in concert with the Department's annual budgeting and performance planning processes, as envisioned by the Government Performance and Results Act and the Clinger-Cohen Act. DOL Offices and Agencies will use this plan as a framework for their IRM operational plans.

INTEGRATED IT STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS



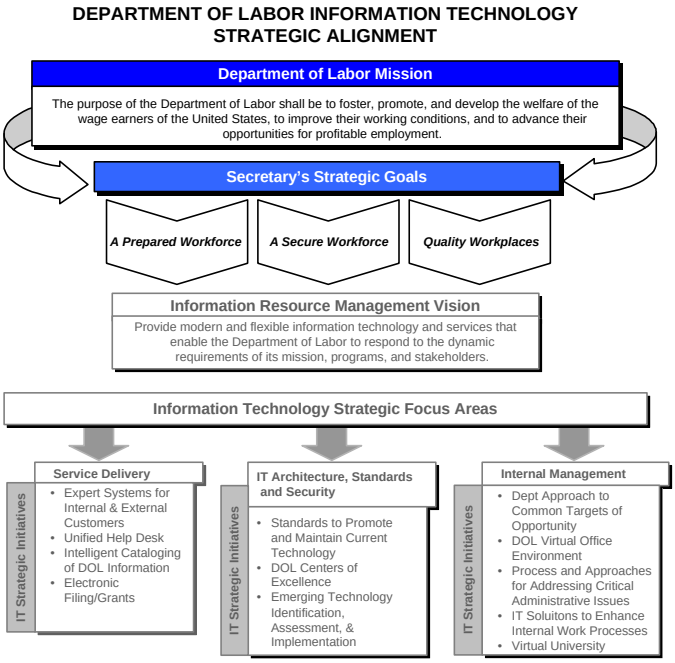
The IT strategic planning process is integrally linked to the major Department business processes. As shown in the above graphic, the coordinated high level-steps associated with each Department management planning process are set to an overall timeframe and share common methods with the IT Capital and IT Strategic planning processes.

DEPARTMENTAL MISSION AND GOALS

The purpose of the Department of Labor shall be to foster, promote, and develop the welfare of the wage earners of the United States, to improve their working conditions, and to advance their opportunities for profitable employment.

PL 426-62: An Act to Create a Department of Labor, March 4, 1913.

The three strategic goals contained in the Department of Labor Strategic Plan are:



- *A Prepared Workforce* – Enhance opportunities for America's workforce. DOL is committed to creating an environment where those new to the labor force or those wishing to improve their potential are provided the assistance and tools needed to achieve success in today's job market. Also included are the departmental programs directed toward those seeking information for making sound economic decisions.

- *A Secure Workforce* – Promote the economic security of workers and their families. DOL is committed to protecting workers' hours, wages, and other conditions when on the job, providing unemployment and compensation benefits when workers are unable to work, and expanding, enhancing, and protecting workers' pension, health care, and other benefits.

- *Quality Workplaces* – Foster quality workplaces that are safe, healthy, and fair. DOL will foster safe and healthy workplaces; influence international bodies addressing core labor standards and international labor issues; increase the representation, advancement, and promotion for women, people of color, veterans, and the disabled in jobs; promote increased compliance with Family and Medical Leave Act requirements; and increase the number of workers with access to quality childcare outside the family.

Associated with each of these three goals are specific programs designed to implement the Secretary's FY 2000 priorities, which include:

- *Youth Opportunities* - This initiative is directed at all youth, especially those young adults who are out of school and making the transition to full-time employment. DOL is committing $2.5 billion annually, and will focus on developing partnerships with DOJ, HUD, DoD, and the National Service Corps. Building public awareness of the challenges faced by 16-24 year olds is key to the initiative.

- *Dislocated Workers* - This initiative seeks to ensure that workers, employers, and communities have the tools to deal with major job dislocations. Where possible, DOL attempts to prevent dislocations by developing job growth/decline predictive indicators. The Department is also expected to use the auspices of the WARN Act to intervene early so that affected workers have complete information. Coordination of benefits is key to ensure dislocated workers receive the assistance they need to make a speedy career transition. Finally, DOL has committed to working closely with employers, partners and communities to foster employment of the disabled.

- *Welfare to Work* - This initiative targets individuals with the greatest challenges to employment - poor work histories, low skills, and substance abuse problems. A new focus area is helping low income fathers so they can better meet their responsibilities to their children.

- *Workforce Investment Act Compliance* - WIA envisions a reformed workforce investment system that is anchored by local One-Stop Shops that are customer focused, business led, community centered, and responsive to shifting labor market needs. WIA implementation will require substantial partnering with other organizations to ensure coordination of benefits.

- *Patients' Bill of Rights* - DOL regulates health plans for more than 123 million Americans; the President's proposed Patient Bill of Rights will have a significant impact on our pension regulation and enforcement activities.

- *Pension Education and Reform* - This initiative focuses on expanding pension coverage to under-served groups. Half of all Americans have no pension coverage. Only 30 percent of women have pensions. Only one-third of African Americans and only one-quarter of Hispanic Americans has pension coverage. DOL will lead actions to expand pension coverage through new legislation, educate the workforce about pension issues, and protect the asset security of pension plans.

- *International Labor Standards* - This initiative is aimed at meeting the challenges of the global economy while maintaining job growth and employee dignity. A major component of the initiative is bilateral and multilateral assistance to foreign governments who are developing labor standards and labor market information systems. Eliminating child labor exploitation is key to this initiative.

- *Domestic Child Labor* - It is imperative that the youngest of America's workers are exposed to healthy, legal, and positive work experiences. In order to create workplaces that are free of child labor exploitation, it is essential that DOL continue

to make youth, parents, and employers aware of child labor laws, and to take appropriate enforcement action against instances of non-compliance.

- *Equal Pay* - Achieving parity in compensation for America's women workers is a priority because it promotes the economic security of workers and their families and contributes to safe, healthy and fair workplaces. DOL will participate in the public debate, strengthen enforcement efforts, and empower the public to promote change.

- *Cooperative Compliance Program* – The Department will continue to test and validate inspection and enforcement programs that prioritize site inspections based on employer provided injury and illness data.

- *Ergonomics* - Nearly 650 thousand workers suffer serious musculoskeletal injuries and illnesses each year, which cost industry $15-$20 billion in workers compensation costs alone. DOL will be called on to build public support and awareness of musculoskeletal injuries. The proposed Ergonomic Program Standard is scheduled for publication in September 1999.

CURRENT BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

The economy of the United States is the strongest in a generation. Unemployment is at its lowest level in nearly 40 years. Business has experienced a period of expansion spanning nearly 20 years. The American economy has powered global growth in spite of financial market turmoil in Asia, South America, and the former Soviet block.

Yet many workers are also feeling the pain of changing times. The Department of Labor must remain at the frontlines to help workers manage that change. We must work in communities that have experienced the loss of good jobs for their citizens, in cities where kids are in need of opportunity, and around the globe where labor standards are being set.

Technology is a driving force in the rapid change occurring in the global labor market. The technology revolution has resulted in the loss of many old-line careers, but it has also been key in the creation of millions of new, high paying jobs. IT has created new resources in the form of information capital that will power the economy for decades to come, yet many workers are in danger of falling behind due to poverty, limited education, and poor accessibility.

IT will enable DOL to respond to the emerging realities of the new economy. IT allows us to maintain and improve the delivery of services to customers despite constrained budget resources. IT is vital to the collection and analysis of labor market information critical to assessing economic performance. IT offers another vehicle for our job training and education programs. IT facilitates our compliance and enforcement programs by ensuring employers have current regulatory information and by tracking trends that help manage our regulatory actions.

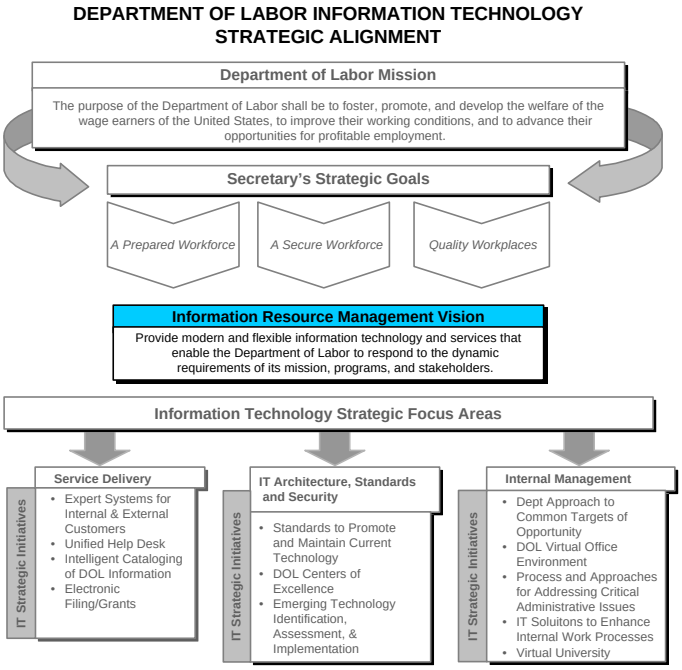
Though the goals and priorities of the Department will change over time, the fundamental purpose and mission have remained unchanged for over 86 years: foster, promote, and develop the welfare of the wage earners of the United States. The DOL IT Community must maintain an information technology capability that enables this fundamental mission, while providing sufficient flexibility to meet changing national priorities. The following sections describe the DOL IT Community's vision and approach for meeting the needs of the Department and its customers.

IT VISION STATEMENT

Provide modern, flexible, and efficient information technology and services that enable the Department of Labor to respond to the dynamic requirements of its mission and stakeholders.

The information technology environment envisioned by the Department has the following characteristics:

- *Mission Driven* -- Maintain alignment with the overall DOL mission and strategic priorities
- *Customer Focused* -- Proactively address the needs of internal and external clients
- *Collaborative* -- Establish consensus for strategic direction among IT stakeholders



- *Standards Based* -- Maintain interoperability by adopting industry standards and protocols
- *Knowledge Centered*-- Leverage the expertise of individual agencies and offices to benefit the Department as a whole
- *Stewardship Embodied* -- Accept responsibility for maintaining an IT infrastructure adaptable to the future needs of the DOL mission.

IT MISSION STATEMENT

The Department's Information Technology mission is to provide the leadership, guidance, and direction necessary to:

- *Design, develop, implement, and manage* information systems that support the Departmental mission, goals, and objectives
- *Enable* efficient and effective communications and information sharing across the Department by adopting industry standards that foster interoperability and interconnectivity
- *Plan* for and coordinate the Department's information technology infrastructure on a strategic basis
- *Ensure* that information technology investments follow sound capital planning practices
- *Develop and Implement* information technology policies that ensure Departmental compliance with laws and regulations
- *Provide* innovative solutions (i.e., electronic government) to internal Department staff and external citizens
- *Promote* the privacy, integrity, confidentiality, and availability of Departmental information and systems by adopting sound IT security and privacy practices and policies
- *Promote* and facilitate learning opportunities that ensure DOL's workforce is adequately trained and experienced in the usage of Information Technology
- *Design and Implement* information systems that ensure the accessibility of DOL information for the disabled
- *Manage* DOL information collection and records management programs
- *Report* to Congress and the President on the Department's IT activities
- *Cooperate and Collaborate* with other Federal, state, and local government organizations, academia, and industry to promote the sharing of information, technology, and expertise.
- *Identify and Utilize* IT best practices from government and industry.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The Department of Labor IT community works within an operational and policy environment that is dynamic and demanding. DOL's programs are key to the country's economic infrastructure and must respond quickly to changing requirements inherent in an information-based, global economy.

Information technology has become a critical enabler for the Department's ongoing mission and programs. Understanding the overarching opportunities and challenges posed by this environment is essential in framing strategic focus areas and initiatives that can provide relevant guidance to the DOL IT community for the next three to five years.

Opportunities

Knowledge Management – Information technology enables an economy based on knowledge. The key assets of the Department are intellectual assets, and they focus on the knowledge worker and corporate data. The IT community can provide the capability to collect, summarize, and integrate knowledge across information sources through networked infrastructure and consistent Department-wide data management. In addition, knowledge management is enhanced through an IT infrastructure that is fully leveraged to share the knowledge and expertise resident in the Department, in its key partners, and in stakeholders. Other opportunities include implementing an IT architecture standards management approach that supports the ready access to information anytime, anywhere and the development of an on-line computer-based storehouse of expertise, knowledge, experience, and documentation about a particular area of expertise.

Centers of Excellence – The Department's decentralized management approach has fostered an atmosphere in which agencies are free to develop IT programs based on the specific needs of their programs. Some agency program priorities encouraged the early adoption of technology as a strategic resource, and have developed specialized IT activities that are considered advanced capabilities within DOL. Developing processes to allow other DOL components to tap into these centers of expertise will allow the Department to leverage previous investments, encourage the adoption of proven standards, and minimize duplication of effort. A centers of excellence program also allows the Department to provide a framework for encouraging and nurturing future innovation.

Technological Breakthroughs – Information technologies will continue to evolve and provide improved opportunities to support the Department's missions, goals, and objectives. Over the past ten years the information management function has been influenced by many technology breakthroughs, such as networking, e-mail, fax, open systems, client server architecture, Electronic Data Interchange, document imaging, mobile computing, groupware, high bandwidth networking, data warehousing/data mining, and Enterprise Resource Planning. Twenty-first century information services will continue to expand on these technologies and create new ones. For example, improved artificial intelligence decision support, virtual education, internet telephony,

global wireless net-phones, hand-held voice recognition PCs, electronic commerce and digital cash, personal assistants, and satellite-supported communication networks are technological innovations that may change the way the Department conducts its business. These new technologies represent an opportunity for the IT community to work with counterparts in the DOL business community to determine whether and how these technologies can be used to better serve our internal and external customers.

Growth of the Internet – One of the most significant technological breakthroughs has been the growth of the Internet. A generation was needed for the telephone to achieve widespread acceptance and use. Internet technologies have achieved the same milestone in seven years. DOL must embrace the strategic importance of the Internet to revolutionize how it delivers service to internal and external customers. Pioneering programs such as E-Laws and America's Job Bank have clearly demonstrated that Internet technologies can further the goals of the Department. Applying the lessons learned from these initial activities to other functions and programs is key. In addition, establishing processes to stay abreast of the quickly evolving Internet environment will become a critical function of the DOL IT community.

Federal Laws and Regulations Linking IT to Mission/Programs – Laws such as the Paperwork Elimination Act, the Computer Security Act, the Government Performance and Results Act, and the Clinger-Cohen Act make clear that IT is a strategic resource. Technology is now central to delivering services and meeting government-wide priorities. These laws, and their enabling regulations, provide strong tools for the DOL IT community to forge meaningful links between IT activities and the core missions and programs of the Department.

Government-Wide Initiatives to Establish Interoperability Standards – Coordinated efforts sponsored by the Federal CIO Council are moving forward to establish IT standards for the Federal government, identify promising new technologies, and improve voice/data network services government-wide. DOL can reap substantial benefits from this interagency program as it seeks to enhance the interoperability of its IT infrastructure. In addition, the CIO Council offers a forum for DOL to build alliances and partnerships with external agencies.

Commitment of Stakeholders to Changing How DOL Does Business – Under the leadership of Secretary Herman, DOL's senior executive corps has developed strategic business processes to implement a "One Department" vision for achieving mission and program goals. The corps strong commitment to changing legacy management processes provides impetus to the IT community to implement meaningful change in IT management processes.

Challenges

Constrained Budgets – Though the Federal budget has entered a period of sustained surplus, discretionary funds used to pay for technology and staff will remain constrained for the foreseeable future. DOL IT plans must take into account these fiscal realities by

coordinating related activities among agencies, exploiting useful economies of scale, fostering common approaches for common problems, minimizing duplication of effort, and focusing on meeting customer requirements rather than implementing specific technology solutions.

Shortage of IT Staff – The ability of DOL to recruit and retain IT professionals, especially at the journeyman levels, will remain an issue in the future. America's booming economy has created labor shortages in all areas of IT that impact not only DOL, but also industry. Current market salaries for highly skilled IT specialties exceed Federal pay scales. DOL can mitigate the impact of the shortage by developing partnership relations with its contractor community, participating in incentive based retention programs, limiting the diversity of technologies supported, and collaborating with other Federal and state government agencies.

DOL Culture of Independence – DOL has employed a decentralized management structure since its inception in 1913. Accordingly, DOL agencies are accustomed to acting independently in deploying information technology. Coordinating IT activities, which have previously been considered internal agency management concerns, is a relatively new concept for DOL agencies. The IT community must foster open communications among department and agency IT stakeholders. IT managers and staff within every DOL organization should approach their jobs with the spirit of collaboration and stewardship. This includes fostering a participatory environment for IT decision making among departmental and agency organizations.

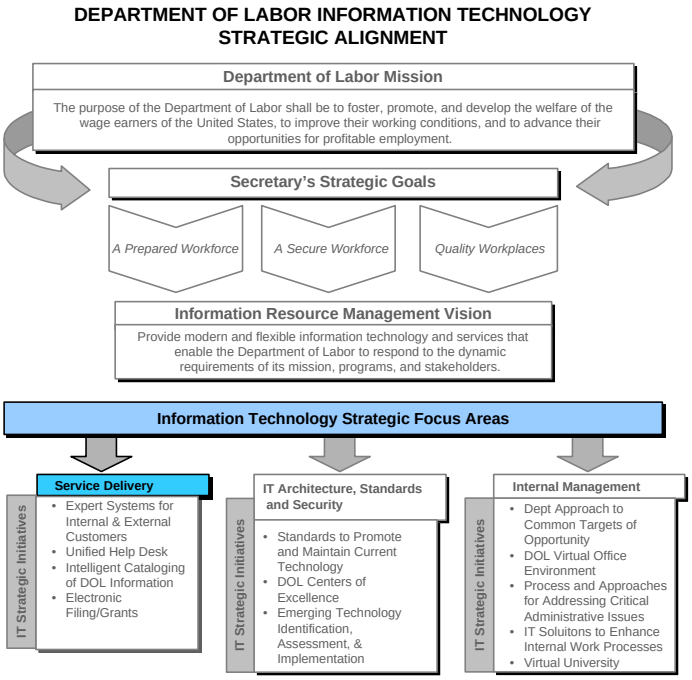
Changing Policy and Program Priorities – In response to emerging needs of the economy and to directions from new administrations, the Department's priorities will continue to change and evolve. However, the fundamental mission of DOL has remained constant for over 86 years: to foster, promote, and develop the welfare of the wage earners of the United States; to improve their working conditions; and to advance their opportunities for profitable employment. Focusing on the needs of this long-term mission, as well as maintaining adequate flexibility to support shorter term priorities, is a critical objective of DOL's career IT managers and professionals.

Heterogeneous IT Environment – DOL's current IT infrastructure runs the gamut from web-based, client/server, standalone and networked PCs, to mainframe environments. The customer community for IT services is also large and diverse and includes state governments, employers, employees, labor unions, community-based advocacy groups, academia, international labor bodies, as well as DOL headquarters and regional, district, and field offices. Effectively managing such a complex environment requires leadership capable of balancing competing needs and building action oriented coalitions. This environment also requires a strong policy framework that is based on consensus and inclusiveness. Cooperative decentralization offers an operational mode for the IT community to assert its stewardship.

IT STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

Information technology focus areas represent domains of strategic importance in which the Department will invest its resources to improve the way it conducts business and serves its customers. They provide a framework that enables the Department and Agencies to link IT activities to the overall strategic mission and goals of DOL. Three focus areas, encompassing service delivery; IT architecture, standards, and security; and internal management, were defined.

Focus Area 1 - Service Delivery



Definition:

- Enable the Department to respond to its customers and achieve its mission
- Provide accessible customer-valued products and services through the use of IT tools and best practices

Description of the Future:

- Fast, easy access to DOL services by our internal and external customers and partners
- Quick and accurate access to DOL information for our customers, constituents, and partners
- Effective dissemination of DOL products and services to our stakeholders
- Flexible IT products and services that adapt to changing program priorities
- Proactive outreach to customers and the general public

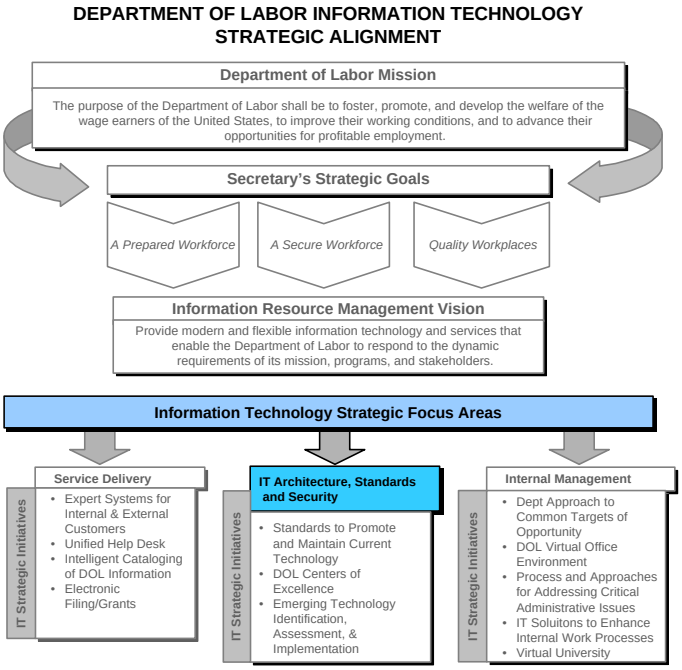
Evidence of Success:

- Improved customer and employee satisfaction

Evidence of Success, cont.:

- Enhanced accessibility
- Completeness and reliability of DOL information products
- Adaptable IT products and services that enable changing program priorities
- Improved ability to achieve DOL mission objectives

Focus Area 2 - IT Architecture, Standards, and Security



Definition:

- Develop and maintain an IT architecture, standards, and security program
- Establish and maintain a process for creating interoperable, integrated, and secure systems
- Maintain maximum flexibility via an overarching architecture

Description of the Future:

- Process for setting and maintaining understood and accepted standards
- Centers of IT Excellence established within DOL
- Establish standards framework that creates interoperablity and integration, and remains current with the state of the art
- Provide an information technology infrastructure that best supports mission needs and evolves in a planned, coordinated, and rational manner
- Maintain an IT environment that meets diverse security needs
- Achieve and retain a balance of business needs and innovation

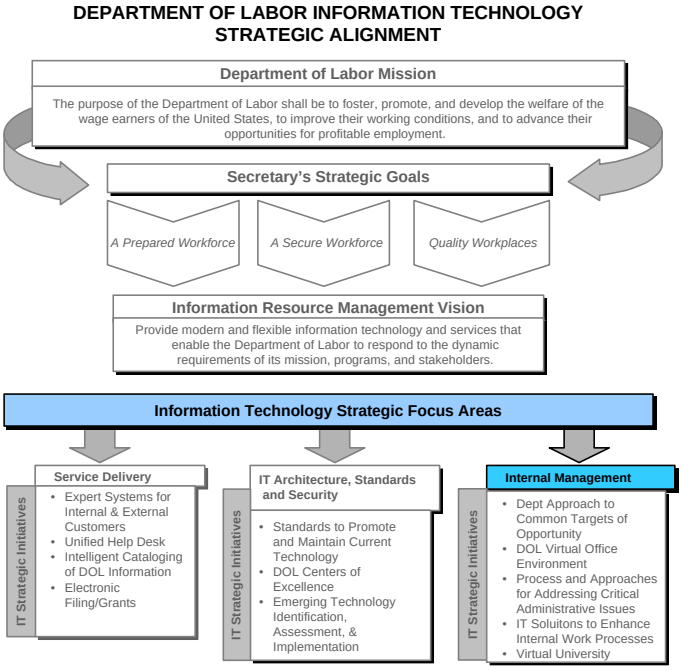
Evidence of Success:

- Creation of a modern, flexible, and maintainable IT environment

Evidence of Success, cont.:

- Implementation of secure IT capabilities throughout the Department
- Increased collaboration among agencies and offices to implement proven IT methods, protocols, and standards
- Increased agreement among DOL IT internal stakeholders on common IT needs
- Improved ability to make sound IT investment decisions

Focus Area 3 - Internal Management



Definition:

- Provide IT solutions to enable all DOL staff to work more effectively and efficiently
- Provide accessible, customer-valued products and services through a combination of IT tools and best practices

Description of the Future:

- Coordinated solutions to common needs
- Customer-driven common framework for the Department's internal business systems
- Virtual office capability that allows DOL staff to perform their functions regardless of physical location
- Seamless access to internal management data
- Department-wide approach for telecommunications, desktop tools, IT planning, administrative systems, and budgeting

Evidence of Success:

- Implementation and acceptance of common IT tools
- Administrative systems and processes responsive to the needs

Evidence of Success, cont.:

of all DOL staff

- Employees able to conduct business effectively no matter where they are geographically located
- Internal management information that is accurate, complete, and easily available

Vision For the 21st Century DOL

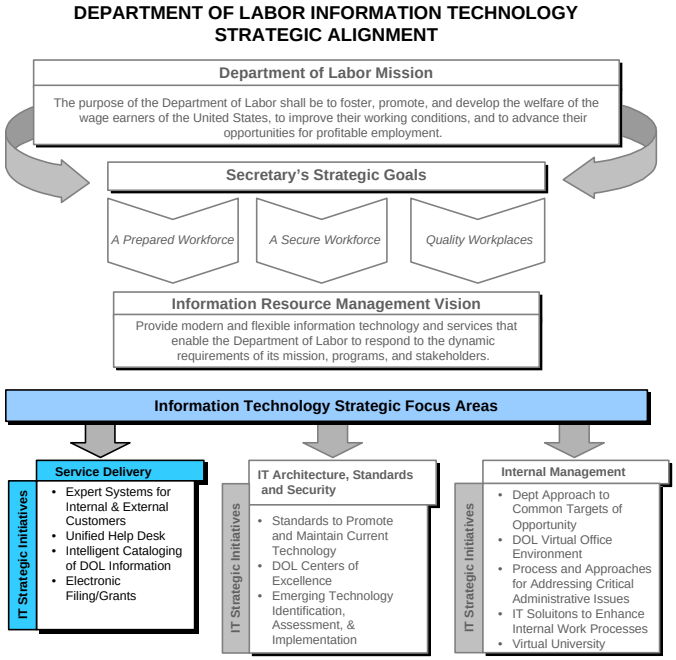
PREPARING THE DEPARTMENT FOR THE 21ST CENTURY The Information Technology Contribution	
Focus Area	**A Vision for the 21st Century**
Service Delivery	*Twenty-first Century Service Delivery*: The Department of Labor provides an array of products and services to Congress, the administration, employers, employees, unions, academia, professional associations, and state governments. These services include the timely provision of sensitive economic and statistical information to employers to access skilled workers, training resources, information on workers and the workforce, protecting workers retirement security, determining prevailing wage rates, and ensuring the health and safety of the workplace. Two characteristics of DOL service delivery stand out: 1) The environment is data rich, and 2) highly dependent upon communications networks and interfaces. Twenty-first Century service delivery will be supported by the IT community through improving the value of, and access to, DOL-managed data and providing the tools that will support improved communications capabilities. Successful achievement of Departmental missions and goals will depend on capturing, storing, and leveraging information collected from regulated industries and the program knowledge of employees. The IT community will work collaboratively with the DOL business community and customers to develop improved data management capabilities that will support the transformation of the Department into a "knowledge organization." As a knowledge organization, the Department will use the data it manages more strategically, and use them in new and different ways, to meet customer needs in a more responsive and efficient manner. Twenty-first century service delivery will also utilize new and emerging technologies to create an electronic business environment that will streamline and enhance communications with our customers. For example, the internet will facilitate "one-stop shopping" for customers through a single point of entry. Employers and grant applicants will be able to submit regulatory reports and grant applications electronically. Front-line inspectors will have access to workplace accident investigation reports, enforcement data, and other health and safety information via hand-held devices to analyze information in real-time and be more responsive to employers. Electronic partnerships with key stakeholders via groupware will improve communication and problem solving. Expert systems will handle routine customer inquiries. A single "window" to the public will provide easy access to Departmental information, products, and services. These tools and techniques will help to disseminate knowledge to those that need it and to empower individuals to make decisions with fewer interfaces or approvals. They support a service delivery model that provides customers what they want, when they want it, how they want it, and where they want it.
IT Architecture, Standards, and Security	*Twenty-first Century IT Architecture, Standards, and Security:* Enabling the Department to improve its service delivery and internal operations capabilities will require a systematic, comprehensive approach to IT management. Consistent with the Clinger-Cohen Act, the Department is establishing a framework or blueprint to guide its information technology baselines in support of Departmental missions, goals, and objectives. This approach will ensure the Department keeps abreast of technological innovation, evaluates the applicability of the technology in the DOL environment against standardized criteria, and integrates new technologies, as appropriate, to support the Department's business lines. In doing so, the Department will provide access to data anytime, anywhere, in a logical and organized manner. This access facilitates data usability, provides technological support that is flexible and

PREPARING THE DEPARTMENT FOR THE 21ST CENTURY The Information Technology Contribution	
Focus Area	**A Vision for the 21st Century**
IT Architecture, Standards, and Security, cont.	maintainable to accommodate changes in the internal and external environment, ensures data integrity based on established standards, and improves the management of data to support the Department's knowledge workers. The capacity to create new products or services, and the ability to transform work into new capabilities, will be driven in large part by technological innovation. The 21st century American worker (whether a Department of Labor employee or customer) will be impacted by such emerging trends as knowledge management, digitization, "smart" products, virtualization, internetworking, disintermediation, reduced cycle times in business transactions, and electronic commerce. Technology to support these new capabilities will include knowledge technologies, expert systems, artificial intelligence, real-time animation, object-oriented systems, and networked computing architectures, to name a few. Departmental information technology professionals will need to understand these emerging realities and work with program managers to assess the applicability to the Department and ensure a secure IT environment. An approach to IT management through a standards-based IT architecture will serve as the foundation for identifying, assessing, implementing, and managing new information technologies. To support 21st century information technology management, the Department will establish Centers of Excellence. These Centers will create, research, and manage knowledge repositories. They will enforce standards, methods, and best practices; establish partnerships and align interests and related activities; assess internal workforce issues; provide internal consulting and coaching services; and provide a mechanism to share expertise and experience. The Center of Excellence organization model provides a complement to the existing hierarchical structure by creating a network of expertise on specific IT subjects, regardless of where in the Department that expertise is located.
Internal Management	*Twenty-first Century Internal Management*: The Department's ability to attract, retain, and continually grow the capabilities of the knowledge worker and provide an environment for innovation and creativity will be critical to its success in the 21st century. Information technologies will support improvements in the quality of work life for DOL employees, rendering work life more productive, and, therefore, more fulfilling. Examples include automating routine operational tasks; using expert systems to empower front-line employees to make decisions and ensure accountability and security; providing electronic audit trails; providing automated job announcements, assignments, and employee appraisals; automating administrative tasks; or using speech recognition software. DOL employees in the 21st century may use electronic personal assistants to do such things as screen and prioritize e-mail and voice-mail messages; perform complex procedural information retrieval; monitor-and-search tasks; provide automation to routine office tasks; roam the internet and/or intranet to search and retrieve topics of interest; or provide automatic, intelligent meeting scheduling. The new technology will transform learning through virtual classrooms and lifelong learning programs. Videoconferencing will reduce travel costs and improve opportunities for collaboration and communication. Remote access to the office will allow workers to better integrate the management of their work lives with their home lives. Information technology capabilities will not only help the Department's employees to streamline and improve what they are already doing, it will help them to exploit new capabilities to allow them to accomplish new and innovative projects.

IT STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

This section describes strategic initiatives by focus area. Each Initiative includes a title, description, implementation strategy, and expected outcomes.

Focus Area 1 - Service Delivery



Initiative 1-1: ***Expert Systems for Internal/External Customers***

Description:

Develop web-based systems that will allow DOL customers, including persons with disabilities, to answer routine questions, determine routine eligibility, and provide a platform for interactive relationships between Department and Agencies.

Implementation Strategies:

- Use existing expert system development procedures as benchmark for developing new systems
- Focus initial efforts on frequent, common customer requirements
- Consolidate and unify capabilities as necessary
- Integrate with the Unified Help Desk
- Complete deployment in FY 2004

Expected Outcomes:

- Handling of routine customer inquiries via expert systems
- Integration with unified help desk
- Reduction of time required for DOL staff and customers to conduct routine matters
- Increased accuracy and consistency of information provided to customers

Initiative 1-2: ***Unified DOL Customer Help Desk***

Description: Provide a single point of entry for all DOL customers. The help desk will eventually handle requests for information, service, and products for all DOL agencies and programs. Difficult or specialized customer requests would be triaged and forwarded to the appropriate program staff for resolution.

Implementation Strategies:

- Pilot help desk in one DOL Agency
- Evaluate success of pilot help desk
- Roll out unified help desk to other Agencies on a phased schedule
- Roll out in concert with Expert Systems and Electronic Filing/Grants
- Complete deployment in FY 2002

Expected Outcomes:

- One stop shopping for customers to obtain DOL information
- Reduction in time spent by program staff answering routine questions
- Actual customer needs identified by trending request information
- Integration with expert systems capability

Initiative 1-3: ***Intelligent Cataloging of DOL Information***

Description: Develop a web-based thesaurus for DOL agencies and programs that will facilitate the search and retrieval of DOL information products available on the internet and DOLNet.

Implementation Strategies:

- Identify existing cataloging efforts across DOL
- Use previously defined project proposals as baseline for building capability
- Collaborate with Agencies to expand the baseline
- Develop a phased implementation approach
- Complete deployment in FY 2001

Expected Outcomes:

- Improved access to DOL information
- Reduced response times for information requests
- Increase completeness of data provided
- Minimize data redundancy in DOL systems

Initiative 1-4: ***Electronic Filing/Grants***

Description: Provide the capability for employers and grant applicants to submit regulatory reports or grant applications electronically. E-filing will enable the automated transfer of information from DOL customers to Agency systems via web-based systems, or submission of physical media.

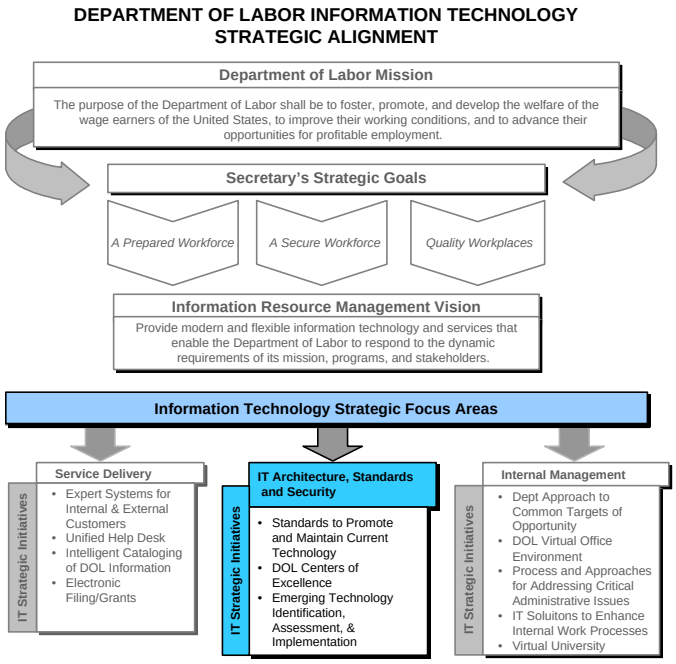
Implementation Strategies:

- Build capability based on lessons learned from current projects
- Complete deployment in FY 2003

Expected Outcomes:

- Reduced paperwork burden on customers and DOL employees
- Reduced costs associated with data entry, storage, and retrieval
- Increased data accuracy
- Faster turnaround for DOL services and products

Focus Area 2 - IT Architecture, Standards, and Security



Initiative 2-1: ***Standards to Promote and Maintain Current Technology***

Description: Develop a standards management process that will allow DOL to identify, evaluate, select, maintain, and retire IT standards in a timely manner.

Implementation Strategies:

- Manage IT standards through the Technical Review Board
- Develop DOL standards adoption and retirement processes
- Deploy standards process during FY 2000
- Create web site to foster dissemination of standards program information
- Establish technical and documentation standards

Expected Outcomes:

- Improved interoperablity of DOL systems
- Seamless transfer of data
- Easy access to information
- Improved access for persons with disabilities, to administrative and program data
- Increased integration of related systems and data
- Improved coordination of services to customers

Initiative 2-2: ***DOL Centers of Excellence***

Description: Develop a program that will allow DOL to create IT Centers of Excellence that can leverage technical skills across locations, organizations, and programs.

Implementation Strategies:

- Develop a Center for excellence management plan that will define the scope of the program, operational procedures and processes, and governance structures
- Create a pilot center of excellence
- Implement program in FY 2000

Expected Outcomes:

- Replication of innovative approaches throughout DOL
- Improved IT management capabilities across the Department
- Acceptance of collaborative approaches

Initiative 2-3: ***Emerging Technology Identification, Assessment, and Implementation***

Description: Develop a program to allow DOL to identify, evaluate, and select emerging technologies that can be used to assist with the accomplishment of the mission and programs of the Department.

Implementation Strategies:

- Involve program, administrative, and IT executives in decisions to ensure a balance between business need and innovation
- Work within the Federal Interoperablity Program
- Pursue an active program to pilot and evaluate new and

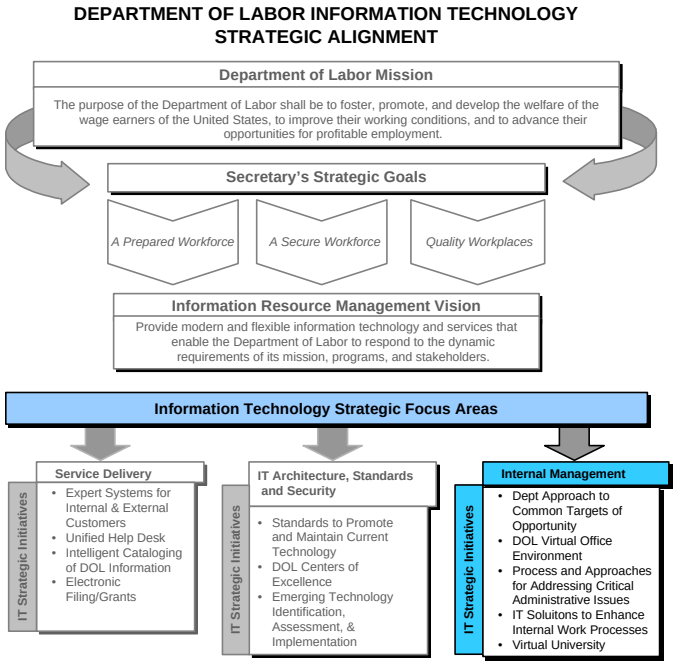
Implementation Strategies, cont.:

emerging technologies

Expected Outcomes:

- Partner with other Federal agencies to evaluate and implement interoperability standards
- A technologically current and cost effective IT environment
- Roll out new technologies in an orderly and effective manner

Focus Area 3 - Internal Management



Initiative 3-1: ***Department Approach to Common Targets of Opportunity***

Description:

Identify, select, and implement a suite of IT tools that can support the core internal management needs of all DOL agencies and programs.

Implementation Strategies:

- Implement common telecommunications protocols
- Increase bandwidth to the desktop
- Implement collaborative tools
- Automate work flows
- Implement using a phased approach
- Complete deployment during FY 2004

Expected Outcomes:

- Potential for lower costs
- Increased performance
- Better coordination of departmental resources
- Better platform for growth

Initiative 3-2: ***DOL Virtual Office Environment***

Description: Implement policies, procedures, facilities, and technology to create a virtual office environment for DOL employees.

Implementation Strategies:

- Remove obstacles to flexi-place opportunities
- Enhance remote access capabilities
- Implement capabilities using phased approach
- Deploy during FY 2002

Expected Outcomes:

- Real-time access and entry regardless of location
- Improved employee morale
- Improved recruitment and retention rates
- Increased productivity of front line workers

Initiative 3-3: ***Processes and Approaches for Addressing Critical Administrative Issues***

Description: Develop management processes and forums to identify, review, and resolve issues arising from administrative IT activities. Proactively study administrative issues to determine need for additional policy, training, and coordination.

Implementation Strategies:

- Develop IT staff recruitment and retention plans during FY 2000
- Implement IT staff recruitment and retention plans during FY 2001
- Improve administrative coordination processes for budgeting, planning, and architecture
- Clarify roles, responsibilities, and communications to address governance issues

Expected Outcomes:

- Increased staff productivity
- Increased customer satisfaction
- Enhanced IT training for staff and executives
- Modernized classification policies for IT positions

Initiative 3-4: ***Provide IT solutions to Enhance Internal IT Work Processes***

Description: Seek out best practices from DOL, other Federal agencies, state governments, and other IT innovators that offer opportunities to improve DOL's internal management activities.

Implementation Strategies:

- Develop shared contract vehicles for obtaining IT products and services
- Develop Seat Management Plan by FY 2001
- Implement and evaluate pilot seat management process in FY 2002
- Complete seat management deployment during FY 2004 based on pilot results

Expected Outcomes:

- Reduced overall and unit costs
- Standardized policies and procedures
- Common tool sets implemented department-wide

Initiative 3-5: ***DOL Virtual University***

Description:

Develop a distance learning capability, in partnership with one or more learning institutions, which will provide life-long learning opportunities to DOL employees and constituents.

Implementation Strategies:

- Develop concept of operations
- Identify learning center partners
- Identify and select distance learning system
- Define initial curriculum

Expected Outcomes:

- Reduced employee turnover rates
- Increased job mobility
- Increased participation in training programs
- Increased employee morale

STRATEGIC VISION IMPLEMENTATION

The Department is committed to continuing the collaborative approach to IT management that resulted in the strategic vision identified in this Plan and to positioning the Department's IT presence at the forefront of the Federal community through participation in CIO council committees, Federal IT cross-cutting projects, and IT conferences. The Department's IT strategic vision will be implemented through management practices and processes that ensure a comprehensive, integrated approach to achieving the information technology environment envisioned by the Department. These implementation activities include:

- *Progress Reports* - The Office of the Chief Information Officer will make periodic reports to the Department's Management Council assessing progress toward implementing the initiatives identified in this Plan and the impact of these initiatives on the strategic focus areas.

- *IT Investment Management* - The strategic focus areas and enterprise initiatives identified in this Plan will be entered into the Department's Information Technology Investment Portfolio System (I-TIPS) to facilitate the management of the initiatives. Alignment with the strategic focus areas will become an investment management criterion for all future IT initiatives. The Department will periodically assess the "portfolio" of IT initiatives supporting these strategic focus areas to track progress toward achieving our strategic vision and as feedback to the IT strategic planning process.

- *Information Technology Architecture Management* - An IT Architecture Sub-Committee will guide ongoing activities to establish the Department's IT standards adoption and retirement processes, conduct information technology configuration management, and provide stewardship of the Department's IT architecture baselines and migration activities. The Sub-Committee is accountable to the full Technical Review Board for approval of its recommendations. Depending on the scope and impact of the recommendations, ultimate approval and ratification by the Management Council may be needed.

- *Regular IT Strategic Planning* - The Department will conduct collaborative IT strategic planning assessment sessions on a regular basis. The purpose of these planning sessions will be to determine whether the strategic vision identified in this Plan is still valid. These sessions will focus on conducting environmental analyses (e.g., identification of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats), gap analyses, and strategy refinement to achieve the Department's IT strategic vision. These periodic IT strategic planning activities will be based on Departmental strategic plan updates and be timed to influence annual budget guidance.

- *Regular IT Strategic and Budget Guidance* - The strategic focus areas and initiatives identified in annual IT strategic planning efforts will be communicated in

Departmental strategic and budget guidance to ensure the strategic and budgeting activities are well integrated and strategic initiatives are funded and implemented.

- *Operational Planning* - Additional operational planning relating to the strategic initiatives identified in this Plan will be conducted by representative agencies or cross-functional working groups. These plans will be developed as part of the Department's standard business planning and budgeting processes.

- *Performance Measurement* --Although the Information Technology function does not fall within the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) reporting requirements, the IT community is committed to the "managing for results" principles contained in the Act. As a result, the Department will identify performance measurements in accordance with GPRA in the tactical-level plans developed to implement the initiatives identified in this IT Strategic Plan.

Creation of this Plan has inspired the IT Community to think creatively about common concerns and to accept responsibility for implementing a shared IT vision. Maintaining this collaborative environment remains key to integrating IT into DOL's core mission and program functions.